Preference is to be given to weaker sections including women. The scheme envisages 22.5% reservation for SC/ST and 27% for Other Backward Classes (OBCs).

Patenting by American companies

†337. PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV :
SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK :

Will the MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the items which have been got patented by American companies, so far;

(b) whether Government have registered any objection against the continuous patenting by American companies;

(c) if so, the reaction of those companies thereto; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take to protect all the Indian products, including bio-products, from American patent companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN) : (a) to (d) Patents are granted under the sovereign prerogative of countries according to their respective patent laws and have territorial effect, that is, they are effective only in the country of grant. Any applicant (individual or company) is free to seek a patent in any country to protect and pursue its interests. Therefore, in the absence of specific details about the countries concerned, technology, name of company, etc., it is not possible to provide specific information as sought in part (a) of the question. However, as and when information is received about patents being obtained on certain items which are not considered patentable and which affect Indian interests, steps are taken to assess whether the grant of such patent can be challenged under the patent laws of the country concerned.

In order to protect bio-resources, the Patents (Second Amendment) Bill, 1999, contains provisions for mandatory disclosure of source and geographical origin of the biological material used in the invention while applying for patents in India. Provisions have also been incorporated to include the non-disclosure or wrongful disclosure of the same as grounds for opposition and for revocation of the patent, if granted. Provisions in this regard are contained in clauses 8, 17 and 28 of the said Bill.

† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

In order to protect traditional knowledge from being patented, provisions have been incorporated in the Patents (Second Amendment) Bill, 1999, to include anticipation by available local knowledge, including oral knowledge, as one of the grounds for opposition as also for revocation of patent. Provisions in this regard are contained in clauses 17 and 28 of the said Bill.

Apart from this Government has also initiated an exercise to develop a digital database of traditional knowledge in the field of medicinal plants to avoid patenting of such knowledge.

DDA's Residential Scheme

*338. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA' : Will the MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether DDA had informed the House in the last session about its intention to come out with a residential scheme in the begnning of the year 2000;

(b) if so, what is the position thereof;

(c) whether DDA is reconsidering its decision in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA) : (a) to (d) The announcement of new registration housing scheme for the general public, has been deferred for some time as it was decided that the DDA should first give top priority to cover all the waiting registrants within a reasonable time-frame and to provide basic infrastructure in all DDA unallotted/vacant flats to make them habitable at the earliest. However, a special scheme for rehabilitation of Punjab Migrants has been announced and this Scheme would remain open upto 30-4-2000.

As a mark of nation's gratitude to the Indian soldiers involved in 'Operation Vijay', the DDA in the year 1999 had announced 'Vijayee Veer Awas Yojana' for which the foundation stone was laid on 25-12-1999. Subsequently, it was decided that to utilise the flats offered under the Scheme in full, this Scheme should be extended to all battle casualities including 'Operation Vijay' w.e.f. 1-5-1999.

Two other Schemes namely, (i) Rehabilitation Scheme for Kashmiri Migrants and (ii) Housing Scheme for Government Servants who have five years left for retirement, are on the anvil.